

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 179901

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL CH

SUBJECT: US-PRC CULTURAL EXCHANGES

1. IN MEETING SEPT 7 CALLED BY DEPARTMENT TO REVIEW CURRENT STATE OF EXCHANGES WITH CHINA, CU/EA DIRECTOR TENNY CONVEYED TO PRCLO THE USG DECISION THAT SECURITY ESCORTS WILL BE REDUCED FOR INCOMING LOW VISIBILITY PRC GROUPS. DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE MINIMUM OF TWO SECURITY ESCORTS FOR ALL OFFICIALLY FACILITATED EXCHANGES. FAVORABLE RESPONSE OF AMERICAN PUBLIC HAS REDUCED NEED FOR LARGE SECURITY ESCORTS BUT OUR CONCERN FOR SECURITY OF PRC VISITORS IS UNDIMINISHED.

2. FOLLOWING THIS OFFICIAL DISCUSSION, TENNY THEN GAVE PRCLO'S CHIEN TA-YUNG HIS "PERSONAL COMMENTS" ON PRC'S RECENT POSTPONEMENT OF ENTIRE AUTUMN ROSTER OF US SCHOLARLY VISITS TO CHINA.

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3. TENNY POINTED OUT THAT CURRENT ENTHUSIASM AMONG

AMERICANS FOR US-CHINA EXCHANGES COULD BE JEOPARDIZED BY SUCH SUDDEN, INEXPLICABLE POSTPONEMENTS WHICH, FOR SCHEDULING AND OTHER REASONS, MAY AMOUNT TO CANCELLATION OF TRIP FOR SOME AMERICANS INVOLVED. WHILE OUR TWO COUNTRIES NATURALLY HAVE DIFFERENT CONCERNS REGARDING EXCHANGES, A SENSE OF RECIPROCAL ENTHUSIASM AND OBLIGATION IS MOST IMPORTANT. WE HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED MANY QUESTIONS

REGARDING POSTPONEMENTS AND THEIR MEANING AND THE PRESS MAY REPORT THE STORY IN THE NEXT WEEK OR SO. MOREOVER, WE WILL SOON FACE A LONG HIATUS IN HIGH VISIBILITY EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA TRIP AND THE ARCHEOLOGICAL EXHIBITION. LACK OF HIGHLY PUBLICIZED EXCHANGES FOR SUCH A LONG PERIOD COULD GIVE US PUBLIC THE IMPRESSION THAT PRC INTEREST HAS COOLED. TENNY CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM IS A VITAL FEATURE OF DEVELOPING US-CHINA RELATIONSHIP. IF EXCHANGES ARE TO FULFILL THIS ROLE THEY MUST BE CARRIED OUT IN AN ORDERLY, MORE BALANCED FASHION.

3. CHIEN TA-YUNG RESPONDED BY AGREEING THAT US-CHINA EXCHANGES ARE IMPORTANT AND STATING HIS "PERSONAL" CONVICTION THAT REASONABLE BALANCE IN EXCHANGES REMAINS A FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPT IN THE US-PRC RELATIONSHIP. CHIEN SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW THE CAUSE OF THE POSTPONEMENTS BUT EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE BALANCE OF EXCHANGES WOULD BE REDRESSED NEXT YEAR.

4. COMMITTEE ON SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION WITH PRC HAS ALSO CONVEYED ITS DISAPPOINTMENT OVER POSTPONEMENTS TO CHINESE. AT DINNER WITH PRCLO OFFICIALS SEPT 6 CSC SPOKESMAN JOHN K. FAIRBANK STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING MOMENTUM AND OF ENSURING THAT EXCHANGES ARE NOT ONE-SIDED. CSC

P A-- -
PLANS TO FOLLOW UP WITH LETTER TO PRCLO. FAIRBANK'S APPROACH RESULTED FROM DECISION TAKEN EARLIER IN DAY AT FULL MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF CSC. AT MEETING, COMMITTEE'S CHINA SCHOLARS INTERPRETED CURRENT SIGNS OF CHINESE SENSITIVITY TO FOREIGN VISITORS AND PARTIAL INTERRUPTION OF SCHOLARLY EXCHANGES AS EVIDENCE THAT PRC FOREIGN POLICY

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LINE IDENTIFIED WITH CHOU EN-LAI IS CURRENTLY AN ISSUE OF CONSIDERABLE DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONTENTION IN CHINA. COMMITTEE CONCLUDED THAT STATEMENT OF CSC'S CONCERN OVER FALTERING EXCHANGES, CONVEYED VIA PRESUMABLY SYMPATHETIC PRCLO CHANNEL, MIGHT PROVIDE AMMUNITION FOR SUPPORTERS OF CHOU POLICY. CSC MEETING CONCLUDED ON OPTIMISTIC NOTE, TAKING COMFORT IN BELIEF THAT IF CHOU POLICY WAS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE, CHINESE SCHOLARLY DELEGATIONS STILL SCHEDULED

TO ARRIVE IN US IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER WOULD ALSO HAVE
BEEN CANCELLED. RUSH

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